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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19TH MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. DINU	(Romania)
later:	Ms. ROTHEISER (Vice-Chairman)	(Austria)
later:	Mr. DINU (Chairman)	(Romania)

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* Items considered together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/47/11)

1. Mr. PANTIRU (Republic of Moldova) said that some aspects of the methodology used to establish the scale of assessments were of direct concern to his delegation. At a time of radical political, economic and social change in Europe and other parts of the world, a base statistical period of 10 years could not adequately reflect sudden developments in a country's capacity to pay. A 10-year period was even less relevant in the case of the newly independent States which had emerged following the breakup of other States. Estimates of their national income arrived at through a simple mathematical division of the gross national product of the State from which they had broken away were also of questionable validity. His delegation would therefore welcome a reduction in the base statistical period to five years. Efforts should also be made to determine whether the current methodology was adequate to address the completely new and unprecedented problems confronted by newly independent States or those with economies in transition. His delegation had difficulty in accepting the traditional definition of national income as the basis for evaluating a country's capacity to pay. It recognized the efforts the Committee on Contributions had made to resolve the problem and understood the methodological difficulties of evaluating the economic consequences of accepting waves of refugees. However, a country's capacity to pay was undoubtedly directly influenced by the existence of military conflicts on its territory and it was unfortunate that no adequate methodological solution had yet been found.

2. On the question of exchange rates, it was unanimously accepted that the rouble-dollar exchange rate of naught 0.70 rouble to the dollar that had been used in the former Soviet Union was not realistic. In the Moldovan capital, the current official exchange rate was close to 400 roubles to the dollar and his country could hardly be expected to pay its contribution on the basis of an already unrealistic exchange rate when its real capacity to pay was 400 times less. A methodology which did not take into account the reality could not be trusted.

3. Other delegations he had consulted regarding the recommended rate of assessment for his country (0.15 per cent) had agreed that it was out of proportion to its ability to pay. The same applied to the other newly independent former Soviet republics. While the recommendations might be correct from a strictly methodological point of view, the methodology itself was inadequate and discriminatory.

4. In conclusion, he said that the rate of assessment recommended for the Republic of Moldova was unacceptable. The current methodology was an obstacle to the process of negotiation and cooperation among States and should be radically amended so that the Committee on Contributions, at its 1993 session,

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would be able to recommend new and equitable rates for 1994. His delegation accordingly reserved its position regarding a decision on the matter by the Fifth Committee. It was aware of the importance of reaching a consensus and would display the same flexibility as other delegations, but felt that the recommendations for many new Member States, as well as for some others, constituted an obstacle to consensus.

5. Mr. MIHAI (Romania) said that, while his delegation approved in general of the comments, analysis and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/47/11), it felt that the recommendations on possible changes in the current methodology, requested by the General Assembly in resolution 46/221 B, were inadequate. The Committee on Contributions had, of course, been entrusted with a daunting task, given the unprecedented situation in which rates had to be recommended for States which had emerged following the breakup of former States.

6. The changes taking place in the world, especially in Europe, warranted a reduction in the 10-year statistical base period, and the Fifth Committee should consider reverting to a five-year period. The concept of debt-adjusted income should be studied further, since it could lead to a better reflection of the capacity to pay of Member States, which was the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments. The Committee on Contributions was to be commended on its substantive analysis of the phasing out of the scheme of limits and he stressed his delegation's flexibility regarding any substantive approach to that matter.

7. With regard to possible improvements in the current methodology for establishing the scale of assessments, he felt that further emphasis should be placed on adjustments to national and per capita income and the application of price-adjusted rates of exchange (PARE). It was to be hoped that the current efforts of the Statistical Division to improve its data base would provide the Committee with more reliable figures.

8. On the question of the assessment of new Member States, his delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions that it had had to work within constraints that made insufficient reflection of the current circumstances inevitable, but shared the concerns expressed in the Fifth Committee by a number of delegations, including some representing newly independent States, regarding the inappropriateness of the scale of assessments recommended. He endorsed the comments of the representative of the Republic of Moldova regarding the relevance of the statistical data for the 10-year base period and the exchange rate used by the Committee and he hoped that the Fifth Committee would take those arguments into consideration. He commended the commitment of the Committee on Contributions to the principle of equal treatment, which should benefit all new Member States and he hoped that those principles, as well as the rule of consensus, would guide the Fifth Committee in its debates and negotiations.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/46/326 and Add.1; A/47/140 and Add.1, A/47/168 and Add.1 and A/47/416; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16; A/C.5/47/5, A/C.5/47/6, A/C.5/47/9, A/C.5/47/14 and A/C.5/47/20)

9. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that her delegation strongly supported the Secretary-General's efforts to restructure the Secretariat, since a streamlined Organization with well-defined personnel policies and procedures was important if the United Nations was to meet the new challenges. Capable human resources were the Organization's greatest strength and the staff were to be commended for their response to the ever-increasing demands placed on the United Nations, despite the uncertainties caused by the restructuring exercise.

10. Her delegation was deeply concerned over the increasing violations of the civil and human rights of staff members, in particular over the number of violent deaths reported in 1992, as well as the continued high number of cases of arrest, detention and abduction. It was the responsibility of all Member States to ensure the security and protection of United Nations personnel; they must continue to support the Secretary-General's efforts to obtain the release of all United Nations staff currently reported missing or detained without due process, and to urge the cooperation of all responsible authorities towards that end.

11. Her delegation continued to be concerned over the lack of immediate access to detained staff and of explanation for their arrest or detention. It wholeheartedly supported the proposals put forward by the inter-agency meeting on security measures held in May 1992 and had voiced strong support for the proposals put forward by the ad hoc inter-agency group meeting in June 1991, particularly with respect to the right of detained staff to adequate medical care and the need to maintain a legal link with detained or arrested staff members through the renewal of their contracts. She would like to know whether those proposals had been followed up and, if not, why not. She also felt that greater attention should be paid to the families of missing or detained staff members and that previously detained staff members should be given facilities for rehabilitation and reintegration into the United Nations community.

12. On the question of career development and related issues such as training, performance evaluation, job classification, mobility and promotion, her delegation welcomed the positive thinking on many of those issues evident in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/6). While she realized that it took time to institute a sound career development system, she pointed out that it had been 14 years since the intention to establish such a system had been announced. Abuse of job classification seemed to be the primary means currently used to "develop" careers.

13. With regard to human resources planning, it was disconcerting to note that the Organization had not considered its human resources requirements and

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their optimum use before undertaking the restructuring exercise. It was essential to have a plan in place for forecasting staffing needs. In connection with recruitment, reference was made to a serious problem of retention although no solid evidence had been provided. Her delegation would like information on the vacancy rates for Professional and General Service staff prior to the suspension of external recruitment and on the number of staff who had left the Organization for higher-paying but comparable positions in the public or private sector.

14. With regard to the staff mobility system, her delegation agreed that greater attention must be paid to the development of a systematic rotation and mobility scheme within the career development plan, given the increased role of the Secretariat in humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping missions. It was important, however, to ensure that the benefits of such a system outweighed the costs involved. In that connection, she asked what were the anticipated benefits of establishing a mobility scheme for the language occupational group and whether they were significant enough to warrant the expenditure required.

15. Staff development and training were critical to any career development plan and greater emphasis must be placed on developing the capacity of the staff to respond to the Organization's new challenges and directions. Her delegation agreed that a strengthened training programme was essential if the Organization was to maintain its capacity to deal with new challenges. In addition, the development of effective managerial skills should be a requirement for career advancement. She wondered however, whether newly recruited entry-level staff should need training.

16. The principle of the system of job classification, or the evaluation of posts through the application of uniform criteria or standards, was equal pay for work of equal difficulty and responsibility. Her delegation objected to the proposal, in paragraph 36 of the report, that Professional posts at the P-2 to P-4 levels should be budgeted at a single level in the same manner as G-1 to G-6 posts. It believed that such a reform would lead to grade creep and undermine the integrity of the classification system. It had read with interest the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system (A/47/168) and believed that the recommendations therein merited careful consideration.

17. Her delegation agreed that performance evaluation was an important component of a career development system. The lack of sound performance evaluation, which could indicate the potential of staff members to assume higher responsibilities, hindered career development. The President of the Federation of International Civil Servants Associations (FICSA), in an open letter to the Secretary-General which had recently appeared in The New York Times, had called for the elimination of "dead wood" from the United Nations, a position with which her delegation wholeheartedly agreed.

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18. On the question of competitive examinations, her delegation would like to make a formal proposal that the G-to-P examination should be given only every other year and that a roster should be maintained from which successful candidates could be recruited. That would eliminate duplication and the waste of limited resources and provide a more stable career ladder for General Service staff. With regard to national competitive examinations at the P-3 level, her delegation, which had been in favour of them, had some concern about continuing them during the restructuring period. It hoped, first, that the examination process was not adversely affecting the prospects of staff members eligible for promotion from the P-2 to the P-3 level, and second, that an adequate number of posts remained available for successful candidates to justify the expense of using the national competitive examination process for recruitment at the P-3 level. According to the report on competitive examinations at the P-3 level (A/C.5/47/5) of the 92 candidates who had taken the examinations in 1991, only 4 had been offered appointments. Her delegation would like information on the cost-effectiveness of the examinations. While it was not in favour of abandoning such examinations, but rather of limiting their number, it believed that it would be less costly to use recruitment missions consisting of representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) and the substantive offices concerned to identify qualified candidates.

19. According to the report on the representation of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508), women currently constituted 30.6 per cent of the staff in posts subject to geographical distribution. Although that reflected a slight overall increase, her delegation remained concerned that men continued to be recruited and promoted at a higher rate than women. At the more senior levels, women were grossly underrepresented. Her delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's measures aimed at improving the representation of women in the Secretariat and urged Member States to support those efforts by nominating more women candidates and encouraging women to apply for vacant posts. Her delegation welcomed the guidelines and procedures that had been developed to deal with the issue of sexual harassment. It only regretted that the process had taken so long.

20. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416), particularly the different options proposed for revising the desirable ranges for geographical distribution of Professional staff presented in document A/C.5/46/2, her delegation believed that no changes should be introduced until the current system, which had been in effect only since 1 January 1988, had been given time to work. Given the significant number of new Member States and the freeze on external recruitment, four years was not enough time to allow the system to make an impact. Another change in the formula could result in renewed instability.

21. Referring to the Secretary-General's statement regarding restrictions on official and private travel of officials of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14, paras. 14-21),

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she said that the provisions governing the private travel of staff members of certain nationalities within the United States did not restrict the official travel of international civil servants and did not in any way impede their work. The United States was committed to continuing to honour its obligations as the host country and would continue to ensure freedom of travel for staff members on official business. In that regard, there was no contradiction between its obligations as the host country and its inherent right to take the necessary steps to safeguard its national security. Her delegation believed that the appropriate context for the discussion of the matter was the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and it therefore recommended that the matter should be considered only under that item.

22. Her delegation's position on the report on the administration of justice in the Secretariat, secondment from government service and amendments to the staff rules which had been submitted at the previous session (A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9 and A/C.5/46/13) remained unchanged.

23. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community, said that they attached importance to an independent Secretariat and a competent staff. In view of the high expectations placed upon the Organization, it was more essential than ever to manage human resources efficiently.

24. The Twelve endorsed the comments of the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization concerning the dedication and versatility of United Nations staff members, who had had to respond to many unfamiliar tasks, often in conditions of hardship and danger.

25. They also supported the restructuring exercise, without which the renaissance of the Organization could not take place. The successful implementation of the changes resulting from restructuring would require high levels of human-resource management skills and the active support of staff at all levels. In that connection, he recalled Article 97 of the Charter, which provided that the Secretary-General was the chief administrative officer, and Article 101, which provided that he should appoint the staff. The General Assembly had repeatedly reaffirmed its support for those Charter functions.

26. The Twelve welcomed the reassurance in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) that the principles governing the recruitment and employment of staff derived from Article 101 of the Charter, namely, the importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and of achieving as wide a geographical basis as possible in recruitment. Articles 7 and 8, which established the Secretariat as a principal organ and provided for the equality of men and women, must also govern the Organization's personnel policy. As noted by the Secretary-General at the forty-sixth session, the vision of the Charter remained as valid as ever.

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27. It was legitimate to expect the highest standard of personnel management. A rigorous recruitment process, based on objective criteria, was essential, and, in that connection, he noted the advantages of competitive examinations. The European Community favoured competitive examinations as the normal method of recruitment at the P-1 and P-2 levels, and efforts should continue to introduce the system at the P-3 level, provided that the promotion prospects of staff members at lower Professional levels were not jeopardized. Attention must also be paid to cost-effectiveness in recruitment procedures, taking into account the relationship between the number of applicants, of successful candidates and of available posts. The European Community believed that all posts, both fixed-term and permanent, should be open to nationals of all Member States, without discrimination as to gender.

28. The system of desirable ranges reflected the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. He saw no reason to change the current methodology, which had been established by consensus at the forty-second session.

29. The Twelve welcomed the progress made in appointing and promoting women, particularly the significant increase in the number of women at the D-1 level. The status of women in the Secretariat should be promoted through equality of opportunity for all candidates, with due regard for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Member States should put forward qualified women candidates for posts and encourage women to apply for the competitive examinations.

30. With regard to the secretarial occupation, he noted that there had been an increase in the number of higher-level posts, particularly at the G-5 level, following a restructuring review. He would welcome further information on the review, together with details of the criteria for filling the increased number of higher-level posts and the impact on staff costs. He noted that the Secretary-General had issued guidelines on the question of sexual harassment.

31. The Twelve recognized the importance of providing staff with opportunities to upgrade their skills. They had earlier drawn attention to the need to evaluate the usefulness of the Organization's training programmes, and it was disappointing that the Secretary-General's report on the training programme in the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/9) was negative about the possibilities of evaluating training activities. The Twelve hoped that guidelines and evaluation tools would be developed to make evaluation a component of every training activity. He noted the references both in the report and in the statement made by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management to the importance of good writing skills for a career in the international civil service.

32. The Twelve shared the concern of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management regarding the cumbersome personnel system in the Organization. There was a need for meaningful performance evaluation to

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assess staff performance and ensure the accountability of managers. While that was a matter for the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer, it was important for the confidence of the staff and of Member States to develop credible procedures. The Organization would benefit from reliance on a core international civil service recruited at the entry level with satisfactory career prospects. Excessive recourse to external recruitment at the senior levels should be avoided. A training programme could be helpful in that regard, but training by itself would not resolve the problem of limited career prospects, as long as the average age and grade of new recruits remained high.

33. The Twelve had previously expressed concern over the lack of a realistic mobility system, since mobility, both between functions and between Headquarters and the field, should be one of the criteria governing the planning of careers and promotions. Such a system would also facilitate staff redeployment and improve flexibility and efficiency.

34. The Twelve shared the Secretary-General's concern at the ever-increasing numbers of upward reclassifications of jobs. A review, in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), would be useful. The proposal that Professional posts at levels P-2 to P-4 should be budgeted at a single level did not appear to be justified in terms of the application of the ICSC master standard, nor was it clear that it would facilitate the task of programme managers or of the Fifth Committee in considering the proposed programme budget.

35. The system of administration of justice in the Secretariat was elaborate and expensive, and recourse to it was increasing. Managers must avoid actions which might result in adverse rulings and monetary awards and staff should be encouraged not to pursue cases that were without merit.

36. A good personnel policy required appropriate financial reward for work done. A sound career development plan, with recognition through promotion, should also serve as an incentive. The Twelve would follow with particular attention the pilot project for the definition of a career development plan.

37. Lastly, at the forty-sixth session, the European Community had drawn attention to the question of spouse employment, and had expressed a desire to discuss the issue at the current session. He would welcome information regarding the policy on that matter.

38. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of the delegations of Australia and Canada in addition to his own, said that he welcomed the recognition in the Secretary-General's report on career development (A/C.5/47/6) that people were the most important element in the Organization's effectiveness and that personnel policies should facilitate the development of staff members' potential. The three delegations fully supported a career development programme that would balance the needs of the Organization and the

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needs of the staff. Such a balance should apply to the various elements of an integrated career development system - recruitment, promotion, performance evaluation, rotation, secondment and training - if the Organization was to fulfil its mandates and if the staff were to be productive while enjoying satisfying careers.

39. Career development issues could not be considered in isolation from each other and needed to be related to a strategic plan for the Organization as a whole. The panel of Australian and French experts which had recently reported on a career development system for the United Nations had commented on the lack of such a plan. The report should be made widely available.

40. The growing use of competitive examinations was welcome, as was the new emphasis on career development planning, although more attention should be paid to the General Service staff. Appointments at all levels should be based on merit, and recruitment procedures should be fair, consistent and transparent; competitive examinations were a means to those ends.

41. He noted the intention to limit external recruitment at senior levels to a minimum. It was essential to evaluate the need for a post before filling it each time it became vacant. At the same time, the desire to improve career advancement prospects for existing staff by not appointing new staff over their heads was laudable. Any curtailment of recruitment at senior levels should, however, take into account the fact that every organization needed a regular transfusion of new blood and that severe restrictions on recruitment would impede progress towards the attainment of the numerical targets for women in senior positions.

42. Promotion within the Organization should, like recruitment, be based on merit, and be fair, consistent and transparent. The panel of experts had noted that the current performance evaluation system was meaningless, and had made interesting suggestions for improvements that would enable the evaluation process to contribute to career development. It was, of course, important to ensure that any new system represented an improvement.

43. The three delegations commended the Secretariat on the progress made in establishing a new focus on training for United Nations staff. The priorities identified by the Secretary-General - leadership, skills related to peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building, communication skills, and technological and professional skills - were valid. Planning and evaluation skills were also important. Training must be properly funded, and expenditure on training should not be seen as a cost to the Organization but as an investment in its most valuable resource, the staff. Training must be closely tied to the work of the Organization as well as to the career development needs of staff, and effective machinery must be set up to evaluate its effectiveness. In that connection, he would welcome information on the evaluation methods used in subjects other than languages.

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44. Secondment in and out of the Organization could introduce new skills, as well as develop the careers of staff members. The United Nations should not limit its opportunities for such enrichment and should not seek to maintain the fiction that staff on secondment from outside agencies relinquished all connection with their usual employer, with whom their long-term career prospects lay. To do so was to create impossible conditions for prospective employees whose expertise would be invaluable, and it might also deprive United Nations staff of a chance to broaden their experience. There was a need for a procedure that would facilitate secondments both in and out of the Organization, with due regard to Article 100 of the Charter.

45. The safety of United Nations personnel was a matter of deep concern. Member States shared the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and were engaged in seeking solutions. The balance of civilian to military personnel in potentially dangerous missions needed to be reassessed and more training should be provided to prepare personnel for difficult environments.

46. With regard to the question of the responsibility of the United Nations and its employees towards each other, he welcomed the Secretary-General's initiatives aimed at strengthening the code of ethics for staff and the efforts to expedite the administration of justice within the Secretariat. Adequate resources should be provided for the various bodies involved in hearing staff grievances. It was disappointing, however, that the Secretary-General's report on the administration of justice (A/C.5/46/7) failed to mention the issue of sexual harassment, which was a particularly distressing phenomenon that affected men as well as women. It was, however, reassuring to learn that new procedures for dealing with sexual harassment had just been issued. Complaints should be thoroughly investigated.

47. The expert panel's report on career development suggested that the management practices of the United Nations lagged behind those of certain national civil services. As the report had noted, given the Organization's position as a role model in various areas of international reform, it should give priority to putting its own house in order.

48. Ms. Rotheiser (Austria), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

49. Mr. SUCHMAN (Czechoslovakia) said that it was impossible to imagine the development of an action-ready, adaptable Organization if staff members remained tied to inflexible habits inherited from their predecessors. His delegation fully supported the plans for the reform of the entire personnel management system, particularly with regard to staff training and performance evaluation. If, however, some employees were unable or unwilling to improve their performance, categorical measures should be taken.

(Mr. Suchman, Czechoslovakia)

50. Referring to the report on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14), he said he hoped that the discussion of the issue would lead to an improvement in the working conditions of such officials.

51. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on competitive examinations at the P-3 level (A/C.5/47/5), he said that his delegation fully supported the organization of national examinations for those posts, but felt that successful candidates should be appointed more quickly.

52. Czechoslovakia had no objection to United Nations service being a life-long career for most members of the Secretariat. Greater use should, however, be made of fixed-term contracts, which provided a good mechanism for filling posts in connection with missions and new or one-time tasks and for hiring personnel on a probationary basis. Because secondment served some of the same purposes, his country favoured that practice. The secretariats of the organizations of the United Nations system should, however, abide by the rules governing secondment and not take decisions regarding seconded employees without the approval of the seconding State.

53. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) contained few surprises and reiterated his delegation's support for the biennialization of the agenda item on personnel questions.

54. Although Hungary was represented at the mid-point of its desirable range, the highest post occupied by a Hungarian was at the P-4 level despite the numerous qualified candidates presented for higher level posts. He was pleased to note the improvement in the overall representation of developing countries in posts subject to geographical distribution. However, with respect to the practice of grouping Member States by geographical region, he reiterated the opinion of his delegation that, since recruitment for geographic posts was based solely on two criteria - the qualifications of the candidate and the representation of his country - there was no reason to compile statistics by regional groupings. Moreover, while Hungary accepted the fact that the two major factors in determining desirable ranges for staff in posts in the Professional category and above were the number of Member States and their assessed contributions, it was opposed to any drastic change in the current ratio between them. Lastly, given the high number of unrepresented countries as a result of the recent increase in membership, steps should be taken to remedy that situation, despite the current recruitment freeze.

55. With regard to training and career development, the question of whether to train the present staff or to hire fully qualified new staff must be decided collectively on the basis of both cost-effectiveness and the Organization's responsibility to its staff, bearing in mind that 75 per cent of the staff averaged 20 years service and that there were certain spheres of

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activity, such as peace-keeping and human rights, in which the United Nations had its own training needs. In the light of the foregoing, his delegation agreed with the priority areas designated in the report on the training programme in the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/9), with the addition of the training of human rights monitors and electoral officials, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Peace (A/47/277).

56. As for the integrated career development system discussed in the Secretary-General's report on career development at the United Nations (A/C.5/47/6), human resources planning must be implemented as soon as the Secretariat could achieve relative structural stability. A skills inventory would be required to coordinate staff mobility and training under the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). Staff mobility would play an important role in the integrated system, and he hoped that the planned pilot project in that area would prove useful. Recruitment, which raised the issues of the competitiveness of United Nations salaries and career advancement for staff, would be a factor in any integrated system.

57. With regard to the proposed changes in job classification, his delegation could in principle support the idea of budgeting for posts at the P-2 to P-4 levels as a group. It would, however, like to know who would then be responsible for classifying the posts within the group and how the Secretariat would prevent the new system from being regarded as a promotion vehicle like the old system. It also wondered how posts at the D-1 and higher levels would be classified, what criteria would be used to classify posts filled through political appointments, what the qualitative differences would be between career and political appointment posts, and whether any additional job classification levels were foreseen.

58. Performance evaluation, promotion and other motivators were of critical importance in ensuring the commitment and dedication of the staff. The current recruitment freeze could not remain in place for long without impairing the functioning of the Organization. The holding of national competitive examinations at the P-3 level, which Hungary fully supported, would be made easier if the freeze were lifted, and the placement of successful candidates would obviously be speeded up. His delegation noted with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General concerning those examinations (A/C.5/47/5).

59. In closing, he wished to express the gratitude of his Government for the understanding and technical advice provided by the Secretariat in solving the problem of taxation of its nationals who were locally recruited at the branch office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at Budapest.

60. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) expressed his country's deep appreciation for the work done by United Nations staff members in difficult and trying circumstances. He commended the Secretary-General for his efforts to maintain a balance between the principle of efficiency, competence and integrity and that of equitable geographical representation, especially in the light of the continuing financial crisis of the Organization. However, the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) showed mixed results, with the number of underrepresented Member States falling from 24 to 21 and the number of unrepresented States rising from 9 to 29 during the period 30 June 1991 and 30 June 1992. Although the increase in the number of unrepresented States was mainly due to the admission of 19 new Members, Bangladesh believed that the Secretariat should strive harder to improve the representation of Member States.

61. It was impossible to overemphasize the importance of the system of desirable ranges for the United Nations as an international organization. That system was based on three factors: membership, contributions and population and his delegation regretted that the General Assembly had not given due consideration at its forty-fifth session to the requirement of raising the percentage weight of the population factor, as called for in resolution 42/220 III. He hoped that the weighting of that factor would be restored to its 1987 level of 7.25 per cent.

62. The increase in the proportion of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, including the significant improvement at the D-1 level, was a positive sign. His delegation had noted with interest the findings of the consultant who had been provided to identify obstacles to women in the Secretariat, as well as the steps that had been taken to remove such obstacles through the action programme, particularly with regard to the coordination of recruitment, placement and promotion and the accountability of managers. It thought, however, that greater attention should be paid to the participation of women at the senior level and to the recruitment of women from developing countries.

63. His delegation looked forward to the implementation of an integrated concept of career development based on the pilot project. Undue limitations should not, however, be imposed on external recruitment at the P-4 to D-2 levels, since fresh talent at all levels was vital to the dynamism of the Organization. It welcomed efforts to improve performance evaluation and staff training, which would help to prepare the Organization to deal with new challenges and to meet the expectations of Member States.

64. Lastly, it was concerned by the comments of the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, to the effect that the United Nations might no longer be in a position to guarantee minimum standards of safety and security for its staff. It hoped that all Member States would make every effort to ensure the safety and security of United Nations staff so that they could carry out their work. More should also be done to help the families of those who had been abducted, arrested, injured or killed.

65. Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria) said that, with the increase in the workload of the staff of the Organization, it was essential to improve motivation and morale by providing the proper conditions of service. A satisfactory career development system was vital, and the Secretary-General was to be commended on his efforts to modernize and improve that system. In his delegation's view, the career development plan should include an effective system of promotion at all levels, create incentives for mobility and provide various opportunities for job training throughout a staff member's career. Implementation of such a system would, of course, require adequate funding.

66. With respect to the overall representation of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, his delegation was pleased to note that the percentage had now risen to 30.6. However, the situation remained unsatisfactory at the D-1 level and above, where the percentage stood at only 10.39. More women should be identified for promotion above the P-4 level. He was convinced that many excellent women candidates were available for recruitment, since they did as well as men in the competitive examinations, and he encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts. Member States shared in the responsibility for improving the representation of women in the Secretariat; Austria would do its best to present more women candidates, and he urged other countries to do the same.

67. With regard to the report on the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14), it was imperative to ensure the security and safety of such officials so that they could carry out their work. As a host country, Austria fully respected all such privileges and immunities.

68. Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria) said that, as peace-keeping operations increased in scope and character to meet the fresh challenges and heavier responsibilities facing the United Nations following the end of the cold war, greater resources would be required for those operations and growing numbers of staff would be called upon to participate in them under difficult conditions. He wholeheartedly agreed with the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management that Member States must do their utmost to protect staff members and their families and continue their efforts to secure the release of staff detained or imprisoned in violation of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. He deeply regretted that several United Nations staff members had lost their lives during recent months.

69. He welcomed the decrease in the number of underrepresented Member States from 24 in June 1991 to 21 in June 1992, but was concerned that the number of unrepresented Member States had increased from 9 to 29 during the same period, a development attributed to the freeze in recruitment and the admission of 13 new Member States. That anomaly could and should be rectified in order to improve the geographical distribution of posts.

70. He welcomed the efforts to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, particularly the success in achieving the 30 per cent target for

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

women's representation. He also welcomed the fact that women now occupied 30.6 per cent of the posts subject to geographical distribution. That level was above the 30 per cent target set by the General Assembly for 1990 but was still short of the 35 per cent target for 1995, which he hoped the Secretariat would do its utmost to achieve. He was pleased to note that quite a number of women were occupying high-level posts. He regretted, however, that only 12 of the 50 appointments made between July 1991 and June 1992 were from developing countries. The Secretariat should rectify that situation by recruiting qualified women from developing countries, particularly in Africa.

71. At the forty-sixth session, his delegation had suggested that the population weighting factor should be increased from the current 5 per cent to 7.2 per cent. It was important to agree on an equitable range once and for all during the current session.

72. Finally, he deplored the fact that a competitive examination to recruit staff at the P-2 level had been held in only one country in Africa, while no examination for the P-3 level had been held at all. Efforts should be made to organize more examinations in Africa in order to recruit more personnel from that region.

73. Mr. ETEFFA (Ethiopia), commenting on the report of the Secretary-General concerning the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations (A/C.5/47/14), which contained references to the safety and security of staff members of the United Nations and other international organizations in various countries including his own, said that Ethiopia, which was host to major international and regional organizations, had always striven to maintain the security of their staff, with the result that no major problems had been experienced during the past three decades. Although some security problems had occurred following the downfall of the former Government as a result of the demobilization of the former army and police forces, the security situation had been fully normalized now that the Transitional Government had established a new police force and set up peace and stability committees.

74. With regard to the killing of Mr. Lourenco Mutaca, a UNHCR official from Mozambique, referred to in paragraph 7 of the report, he said that four suspects had been apprehended and that the Government was doing everything in its power to bring those responsible to justice. He also wished to apologize wholeheartedly for an incident in which an official had been fired upon and detained for failing to stop after inadvertently violating traffic regulations. He stressed that the incidents in question, and other similar episodes, had occurred immediately after the change of government. The Transitional Government had now brought the security situation under control both in the capital and in rural areas and was doing its utmost to create conducive working conditions for international and regional organizations in Addis Ababa. Indeed, an agreement had been reached between the Transitional Government and officials of the Economic Commission for Africa that they would work together very closely in all areas of mutual concern, including the security of United Nations personnel.

75. Mr. MAQTARI (Yemen) expressed confidence that the appointment of a new head of the Office of Human Resources Management would be far more useful, in terms of improving the performance of the staff and indirectly in alleviating the financial crisis, than the services of an outside consultant. It should also help to resolve the issue of underrepresented States, of which his country was one, whose repeated efforts to place their nationals in vacancies in the United Nations system had repeatedly been thwarted without justification. Those countries had been striving to ensure full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution in all posts and expected to see that principle properly applied, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A. Meanwhile, his delegation wished to know the legal justification for direct appointments by the Secretary-General for at least one year to posts in the Professional category and above, as mentioned in paragraph 10 of document A/47/416.

76. While agreeing with the Secretary-General that competitive examinations helped to attract qualified staff, his delegation hoped that such examinations would not impede recruitment of staff from underrepresented States, expressed concern at the delay in transmitting application forms for posts to such States and hoped that forms would be sent promptly in the future. It was also essential to ensure equal treatment of the six official languages, including their use for both written and oral tests and in the assignment of staff to supervise examinations. While applauding the Secretariat's plans to enhance the linguistic and communication skills of staff, his delegation also requested the establishment of a communications unit to cover skills such as drafting, meetings servicing, oral presentations and communications with the media in all six official languages without distinction.

77. Mr. TAMMAR (Saudi Arabia) said that the new tasks entrusted to the United Nations system over the past five years, particularly in the areas of peace-keeping and peacemaking, made it necessary to expand responsibilities in a situation of limited resources, to engage in a broad process of restructuring and to make the Organization more effective while giving the staff a more active role in planning and developing their careers through an integrated human resources management system.

78. The assignment of new tasks to the Organization was further complicated by the need for some staff members to work in conditions of extreme insecurity. His delegation, which was deeply concerned by the loss of life, detention and abduction of staff referred to in document A/C.5/47/14, reiterated its respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations and urged the Administrative Committee on Coordination to take urgent measures to ensure the security of all staff.

79. Noting the summary of the main findings of the review requested under paragraph 26 of General Assembly resolution 46/190 (A/47/336), his delegation hoped that account would be taken of the following recommendations. Exact requirements for meetings in terms of interpretation and documentation should

(Mr. Tammar, Saudi Arabia)

be carefully planned in advance. The Meetings Servicing Unit should be promptly informed of any changes in requirements, and electronic means should be used to schedule the services of interpreters and other staff required for meetings. There should be further cross-exchange of language staff. Meetings should be spread evenly throughout the year and among different United Nations offices. Use should continue to be made of word-processing and electronic-publishing technologies, without incurring additional costs. Computers should be made available to translators at Headquarters in order to facilitate the checking of terminology. The costs and benefits of videoconferencing should be analysed, as an alternative to sending interpreters to service meetings abroad. Finally, in the context of the broader review of the structure of the Secretariat, his delegation hoped that a detailed study would be undertaken of developments in Arabic translation, including an assessment of performance and productivity since 1975 and of the problems preventing an improvement in standards of translation and interpretation into Arabic.

80. In view of the need for a constant improvement in the skills and qualification of the Organization's staff, his delegation regretted the extremely low level of spending on staff training by comparison with other organizations of the United Nations system and recommended that the current level of spending on staff training programmes should be increased. The efforts of the Office of Human Resources Management to establish long-term programmes should be supported and due attention should be given to language training. The use of Arabic, as one of the six official languages of the Organization, was of particular significance in that regard. His delegation also believed that the time had come to open the channels of communication between management and staff in order to restore trust and transparency with regard to career prospects in the context of long-term restructuring.

81. Given the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff expressed in Article 101 of the Charter, it was unfortunate that so many Member States should remain unrepresented or underrepresented. His delegation called for the provisions of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A to be extended to all posts subject to geographical distribution. With regard to supplementary payments, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's statement that such practices were entirely unacceptable. In conclusion, his delegation believed that restructuring must be continued in order to ensure the best possible use of the Organization's resources wherever they were most needed.

82. Mr. Dinu (Romania) resumed the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/46/327 and Corr.1 and Add.1; A/C.5/47/16; A/C.5/46/CRP.1)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued) (A/47/7/Add.1, A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1, and A/C.5/47/7)

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/47/3, A/47/6, A/47/16 (Part I) and (Part II) and Add.1, A/47/32, A/47/116, A/47/159 and Add.1, A/47/407 (E/1992/11 and Add.1 and 2) and A/47/408 (E/1991/143))

83. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that the revised estimates were highly relevant to the effective administrative functioning of the United Nations. In its resolution 46/232, the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to report on the financial implications and the programmatic impact of organizational changes, but the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/2) dealt solely with the financial aspects of restructuring and his delegation shared the concerns expressed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) concerning the lack of information on the programmatic aspects of the restructuring process.

84. He noted the Secretary-General's assurances that the programme of activities adopted by the General Assembly in the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 had not been directly affected by the restructuring and supported the goal of the process, which was to consolidate and streamline the Organization's activities into well-defined functional categories so as to ensure effective implementation of the objectives of the Charter and the mandates entrusted to the policy-making organs.

85. He noted that the first phase of restructuring involved the reorganization of various departments, the abolition of 18 high-level posts, the creation of 5 new high-level posts and savings of approximately $4.4 million. He trusted that equitable geographical distribution would be maintained with regard to high-level posts and that the implementation of mandated activities would not be adversely affected.

86. With regard to the treatment of vacancies, the report stressed that current mechanisms made it difficult to respond rapidly to changing needs and that greater flexibility was needed in the management of staff resources. With that in view, the Secretary-General had proposed the establishment of an internal procedure through which the continuing relevance and rational use of posts that became vacant during the biennium would be examined. His delegation believed that the Secretary-General should be given the necessary flexibility within the framework of the rules governing the transfer of resources between sections of the budget.

(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

87. Although the Organization needed to adapt to the new challenges posed by a changing world, that should not be done at the expense of mandated activities, particularly in the priority areas already endorsed by the General Assembly in the medium-term plan and in the programme budget for 1992-1993.

88. Numerous revisions had been proposed to the medium-term plan to take account of the mandates deriving from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the first phase of the restructuring process. In paragraph 16 of its report (A/47/16, part II), CPC recommended approval of those revisions on the understanding that further modifications would be made to the relevant programmes to take into account any follow-up decisions regarding those mandates which the General Assembly might take. His delegation endorsed that recommendation and would strive to secure agreement on the revisions submitted for consideration to the General Assembly by CPC. He also endorsed the conclusions contained in paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 of the report concerning the need to maintain the prominent place of the medium-term plan by finding ways to improve the consideration of the plan, notably by developing a prototype of a possible new format. He hoped that the seminar proposed by CPC would assist the Secretariat in drafting a proposal to that end.

89. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that she welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to reform and restructure the United Nations so as to enhance efficiency and coordination by streamlining the Secretariat and avoiding duplication of activities. Although she recognized the prerogative of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter, she shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee as to the practical difficulties which might result if the budget structure failed to correspond to the organizational structure of the Secretariat.

90. While she welcomed the reduction in high-level posts - which would create clear lines of responsibility - and the resulting budget savings of $4.4 million, she felt that restructuring should not be an end in itself but should enhance the Organization's ability to implement the mandates entrusted to it by Member States. In order to evaluate fully the effects of restructuring, detailed information on programme delivery was needed and her delegation looked forward to receiving that information before taking a final position on the revised estimates. Extensive consultations were also needed between Member States and the Secretary-General on the reform process recommended by CPC.

91. With regard to the treatment of vacancies, she regretted the absence of a clear section-by-section overview showing which posts were vacant or temporarily filled, and supported the Advisory Committee's request for additional information on that question.

(Ms. Rotheiser, Austria)

92. She welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to apply financial regulation 4.5 and rule 104.4 to a greater extent in seeking increased flexibility in the management of vacant posts, but would like further information on the intent and scope of the proposal, as well as the proposed criteria to be followed. Greater flexibility without control might jeopardize the priorities set by the General Assembly and, as a matter of principle, the current procedures requiring the approval of the General Assembly for transfers of posts or resources must be respected.

93. Further information was needed on how the recruitment freeze affected programme implementation. She agreed that the policy of giving priority to sending staff members on peace-keeping missions should be reconsidered if it meant that priority programmes could not be properly implemented.

94. She shared the view that the medium-term plan should be improved so as to fulfil its original purpose as the policy instrument of the Organization in the field of planning and felt that the technical seminar proposed by CPC could help to achieve that goal. She also welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals regarding a new budget format.

95. Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia) said that he supported the Secretary-General's initiative in reorganizing the Secretariat in order to improve its effectiveness. He welcomed the $4.4 million budget savings achieved by the reduction in high-level posts, but hoped that such savings would not be viewed as the primary goal of the restructuring process, which should serve to enhance the decision-making capacity of the Secretariat, streamline its structure, and contribute to the coherent implementation of all mandates of the Organization. It was vital to ensure that the restructuring undertaken did not have an adverse impact on the various programmes. He noted the lack of information on the programmatic aspects of restructuring in the report of the Secretary-General and supported the recommendation by CPC that the Secretary-General should provide the Assembly with the relevant information on the various qualitative aspects of the restructuring process.

96. With regard to the proposal concerning the prototype of a new budget format (A/C.5/47/3), he supported the recommendation of CPC, hoped that the presentation would be simple and readable, and felt that the quality and accuracy of the narrative could be improved.

97. He expressed appreciation of the Secretariat's efforts to present regular budget and extrabudgetary resources in a uniform manner and believed that the integrity of the budget process should be maintained. He agreed with CPC that the General Assembly should pay due attention to the relationship between mandates, programmes, budget sections and the Secretariat structure.

98. With regard to the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1994-1995 and the additional priorities proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/47/358), he felt that those priorities did not need to be

(Mr. Wibisono, Indonesia)

redefined, since they were clearly stated in resolution 45/253 and included the maintenance of international peace and security, the economic development of developing countries, the economic recovery and development of Africa, the environment, and international drug control. He shared the views expressed by CPC on the question.

99. Referring to the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, and specifically the programmes on trade and development, he said he agreed with the proposals relating to the priorities for the subprogrammes approved by the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD and hoped that the recommendations adopted at the eighth session of UNCTAD in Cartagena would be fully respected in any other decision to be made in that regard.

100. With regard to programme 1 (Good offices and peacemaking, peace-keeping, research and the collection of information), he welcomed the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" as a timely contribution to the strengthening of the role of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security. As the question was currently being discussed in the relevant intergovernmental bodies, he supported the recommendation of CPC that the proposed revisions should be reviewed by the General Assembly in the light of the outcome of those discussions.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.